

present; the propositions everywhere made to him, and at every moment; his decided resolution, not to become the pretext of a civil war; the generosity he had exhibited in abdicating, in order to render the conclusion of a peace more practicable; and his settled determination to banish himself in order to render that peace more prompt and more lasting.

The messengers returned to their Master, who, after some doubt and hesitation, despatched General Gourgaud with the following well-known letter to the Prince Egent: —

ROCHEFORT, *18th July*,
1815.

ROYAL HIGHNESS—A victim to the factions which divide my country, and to the hostility of the greatest Powers of Europe, I have terminated my political career, and come, like Themistocles, to share the hospitality of the British people. I place myself under the protection of their laws, and I claim that from your Royal Highness as the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies.

(Signed) NAPOLEON.

About four p. M. Las Cases and Savary returned to the *BeMerophon*, where they had a long conversation with Captain Maitland in the presence of Captains Bartorius and Gambler, who both declare that Maitland repeatedly warned Napoleon's adherents not to entertain the remotest idea that he was enabled to offer any pledge whatever to their Master beyond the simple assurance that he would convey him in safety to the English coast, there to await the determination of the British Government.¹

Napoleon had begun to prepare for his embarkation before daylight on the 15th. It was time that he did so, for a messenger charged with orders to arrest him had already arrived at Rochefort from the new Government.² The execution of this order was delayed by General Becker for a few hours

¹ On their second interview Captain Maitland's precise words to Las Cases were: —

You will recollect that I am not authorized to stipulate as to the reception of Bonaparte in England, but that he must consider himself as entirely at the disposal of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

See the Croker *Correspondence*, vol. ii. pp. 248-249, for the orders given to the *imperial*.

* *Thiers* (tome xx. p. 584) says these orders had been intentionally delayed by Fouché. See also the Croker *Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 236.